

S. Ghosh, MARC. Regn. No. 86.

Diagnostic characters: Head narrow, snout elongated, body much compressed, tail laterally compressed, scales more or less hexagonal, 52 scale rows on thickest part of body, the lowermost rows with two small tubercles.

Colour: Blackish brown above, ventral portion bright yellow, a narrow yellow ring just below head, another two on body. Tail with 10 cream-white stripes.

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18. A RECORD AUDIO FEAT BY AN ANURAN

While staying in a sanitarium near Igatpuri (Nashik dist, Maharashtra), in the late summer of 1993, I came across an interesting, non-stop audio feat by a frog. Unfortunately at that time, I could not identify the species, for it was calling from the middle of a large, extensive waterlogged patch which was almost inaccessible. But in later years I came across similar feats, first in August 1998, in the Pune University Campus and secondly from an inundated ditch atop a hill near Pune in June 1999. In the second instance I was able to catch the frog and identified it as the colourful fungoid frog (*Rana malabarica* Bibr.)

In the case of the Igatpuri frog, I first heard its shrill call on the evening of June 6, 1993. The previous two days had experienced heavy rainfall. The frog started calling at about 1745 hrs on June 6, and kept on calling till the early hours of the next day. It apparently stopped calling at about 0730 hrs, when the first rays of the rising sun reached the spot where it sat. I carefully listened and monitored the call for the next three days and arrived at some statistics.

Every night the frog called continuously for almost 13 hours. The call can be transcribed as

Oo-wak-wak.....wak! The call always started with a short and quick *Oo* followed by quick-repeated *wak*. The sound *wak* was repeated from one to twenty-six times in one go (average=7). The interval between two successive call series was just one or two seconds. On an average, the *wak* call was repeated 102 times per minute during the evening and midnight hours and 83.42 times per minute during the morning hours (average=96). The total number of times the syllable *wak* was uttered throughout the night (about 13 hours) was calculated to be around 78,000. The small creature also kept on calling during the daytime, but intermittently. The estimated day call figure came to around 18,000. Adding this figure to the night figure, it can be plainly stated that the frog uttered the call *wak* 96,000 times in 24 hours!

Considering the small size of the animal, this was quite an extraordinary feat!

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